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20 YEARS!
1987-2007
C!N
Glister
ABCDEF

Going Clubbing with Glister's Mister

Mix a bit of Little Lulu and a slight pinch of Wednesday Addams, add a generous helping of sweetness, and serve with a twist... that's a *very* basic recipe for *Andi Watson's* ***Glister,*** a *very* memorable comic book series about a *very* memorable little girl who has some *very* memorable acquaintances.

"***Glister's*** about a girl, Glister Butterworth, to whom strange and wonderful things happen," Watson told ***CSN.*** "It's like she's a magnet for oddness. She lives in a rambling house called Chilblain Hall (which is a character in itself, and one I'll be working with in issue #2) with her father and neither of them bat an eyelid when a troll takes up residence under the bridge, or they're life is interrupted by a haunted teapot. They take it as part of everyday life, as absurd as any other aspect."

In her first tale, Glister takes a literary turn when she befriends the ghost of a long-dead and oft-maligned author. Watson explained how the idea came about. "I *love* books. I love second hand bookshops. I like to riffle through the hardbacks you find on the shelves of pubs that have probably been bought by the kilo for dressing. There's the contrasting attitudes that books are both permanent and ephemeral. It boggles my mind that a trashy CD can cost you £10, but you can pick up a second hand copy of ***The Once and Future King*** or ***The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*** or even ***Middlemarch*** for £1 and get an awful lot more enjoyment out of them.

"I am also struck by how the older authors get, the more protective they can be of their reputation. I half remember a quote from *Martin Amis* about the only thing authors care about is being read after they're dead. So it seemed natural for a ghost who has unfinished business, and is an author, to return and try and find a place for himself in the literary canon."

Of course, a ghost—even a literary spirit—couldn't ask for a better ally than young Glister, who "is very polite and agrees to help the ghost, thinking it will be a small task, soon completed. But the unwritten novel proves to be one of those doorstopper-sized classics like ***Vanity Fair*** or ***Great Expectations***—and as she has to type as the ghost dictates, it takes over her life. She then tries different ways of getting herself out of the agreement but fails, so has to take drastic measures. And in true ghost story tradition, there's a twist at the end."

Obviously, the ghostly author, Philip Bulwark-Stratton, is modeled on *Edward Bulwer-Lytton*; what was it about this little-known author that inspired Watson?

"The strongest debt to Lytton is the literary prize from San Jose State for the worst start to a novel [The famous "It was a dark and stormy night," memorialized by *Charles Shulz* and Snoopy]. It's the kind of thing that *would* bring an author back from the grave," Watson joked.

"Lytton is a fascinating character, I've dipped in and out of a biography of his by *Leslie Mitchell* and it seems like his life is a lot more interesting than his fiction. But he wrote Newgate novels, historical fiction and even sci-fi with ***The Coming Race*** and ***Vril,*** and was very successful in his own lifetime. But there's also a dash of *Henry James* in there, who seems like he would have been more pleasant company, as well as Dickens, in that the ***Albert Buckle*** novel owes much to ***Oliver Twist.***"

As the story developed, Watson was so pleased with the character of Bulwark-Stratton that the ghostly author will reappear in upcoming issues of ***Glister.***

Upcoming issues... that means that ***Glister*** is more than a one-shot, correct? "The book is an ongoing 64-page bookshelf format with a spine, like the YA popular readers in bookstores. There are no plans for collecting them for the foreseeable future; they're complete unto themselves. All the stories are self-contained so anyone can pick up a copy and enjoy it without any continuity stuff. Characters like Bulwark-Stratton will come back from time to time but you won't have to read previous issues to enjoy the story. The books are bi-monthly and are designed to have a long shelf life. At $5.99 I want to give a good value read that you can dip in and out of and enjoy. The first issue has a long ***Glister*** story and a shorter ***Skeleton Key*** back-up (also self-contained)."

The return of ***Skeleton Key*** is certain to make this book doubly appealing. What led to the inclusion of the ***SK*** short? "I drew a three page ***SK*** story for SLG's anniversary comic and had a lot of fun working with those characters again. I *do* often get asked about *SK*, which seems to be a favorite with readers, but it was more that the characters would fit well within a ***Glister*** book. They're different but share a recognizable reality with more fantastic aspects."

As for the story... "Originally it was to do with sumos. Then it was gladiators, but that ended up being too long to fit. So now it's an ***SK*** story with vampires. But not chinese hopping vampires, or *Christopher Lee* vampires...something different.

"It's great to be drawing Tam and Kitty and Mr. Raccoon again. But I also now have an SK gladiator story I'll have to tackle at some point, so yeah, there might be more."

As interesting as the supporting cast and the backup stories might be, it's Glister herself who makes this book a must-read. When did the character first spring from Watson's imagination? Has she gone through any changes as her story developed? "Good question because I've had a story about a 'girl in old house with books and a ghost' for quite a while, and it's one that I'd go back to every now and again. I'd started writing a graphic novel of the short story I did for nerve.com which also has ghosts in it, but this story had been nagging at me so long I put the OGN aside to concentrate on ***Glister.***

"Earlier incarnations had an older girl with a slightly more coming-of-age story, but it felt a little too familiar. I have a young daughter and I wanted to create something she might like, while also creating something satisfying for me to work on for a long time (my notebooks are getting filled with ideas). So Glister is a character who's truly all-ages, for girls, YA readers... *anyone* with an interest in fairy tales, no matter how old."

Strange things happen around Glister Butterworth
Frightfully inconsiderate it is too.
Perhaps it's because she gets out of the wrong side of the bed each morning
Or perhaps it's because the clocks struck thirteen when she was born.
Occasionally the strange things begin with a knock at the door.
KNOCK KNOCK

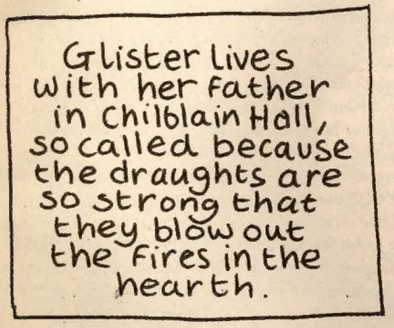
What inspired Watson to develop ***Glister*** into an all-ages series? "It's more that the stories I have are all-ages, rather than deciding to do an all-ages books and working around that. While I was working on my 'grown up' graphic novel, ***Little Star,*** I was jotting down notes for these stories as well as reading quite a lot of children's books, a dash of YA, and also picture books. It would be nice to hand over Glister to my daughter for her to read and also have a book that younger readers will enjoy with- out ever feeling like I'm writing down to them. The authors I admire—people like *Joan Aiken, Diana Wynne Jones, A. A. Milne, T. H. White, Alan Garner*—you never feel like they set out to write children's books, they're writing stories and they happen to appeal to kids and adults. It's also what I love about *Miyazaki.* That's what I hope I've done with Glister."

Are the challenges and the rewards of all-ages storytelling different? "To be honest I'm enjoying it much more than thinking of it as a challenge. It all seems to flow very naturally, the story and the art complimenting each other, and I'm loving working on it. The great thing will be able to hand these books out to kids and adults, for birthdays presents and suchlike. I can give them a book of mine without having to worry about content. I can visit schools and show my work."

While ***Glister*** has a certain *Charles Addams*-ish story element, the book has a delightfully different charm and a distinctive personality. Is Watson drawing from any inspirations

Continued on next page

Courtesy your friendly neighborhood comics outlet!


Glister lives with her father in Chilblain Hall, so called because the draughts are so strong that they blow out the fires in the hearth.

here, or is the story sort of dictating its own style and tone? "Nothing specific, just the children's books I've been reading over the last five years, the only cartoonist I've looked at in any detail is *Osamu Tezuka*. I might be looking back to the memory of the illustrators I admired during art school—*Kay Nielson, Dulac, Rackham, Charles Robinson, Mervyn Peake*—but it must be lurking in the subconscious more than anything. I'm just drawing, and it's me coming out of the nib of the pen."

The story seems to have inspired Watson to create a new visual style: ***Glister*** seems a little more detailed, a little more full, and even more flowing than Watson's usual work. You've hit the nail on the head with the 'flowing' description," Watson said. "I switched to a pen so I could just draw, rather than get bogged down in style with the brush. It's easy to obsess over the materials, I wanted to toss that out the window and capture the confidence of the drawing I do in my sketchbooks. Now I let the art flow and get to work in a bit more detail and add a wider variety of texture. In addition to that I like describing Glister's world, the cracks in the walls of Chilblain hall, the wooden floorboards, the flaking wallpaper."

Join the Club

Thanks to the intricacies of publishing schedules and the complexities of lead time (in publishing, the amount of time between the completion of a project and its appearance in comic shops), ***Glister*** isn't the only female-protagonist-focused book coming from Watson this summer. He's also working with artist *Josh Howard* on ***Clubbing***, an original graphic novel for DC's Minx line. While the lead character is a bit older that Glister, she seems to have a similar appeal.

Watson explained that ***Clubbing*** focuses on "a spoiled city kid named Charlotte Brook—or Lottie as we know her—who's exiled to the country after a run-in with the law. Lottie's a Goth who's sent to live with her elderly, golf-club running grandparents in the English Lake District. So there's lots of fun with the fish-out-of-water aspect—but there's also a murder mystery that deepens into something even bigger. On top of that the enjoyment is in Lottie's reaction to her new-found surroundings and her being smart, sarcastic, and funny. ***Heathers*** is the teen movie to end all teen movies, and that was my inspiration for ***Clubbing***... it's like *Agatha Christie* meets ***Heathers***."

In some ways, this almost sounds like it could be a 21st Century take on the Nancy Drew motif. Is that an unfair analogy? "No, not at all," Watson said. "Any teen detective type has got the long shadow of Nancy Drew cast over them. I like Nancy Drew—I have a reprint of ***The Secret of the Old Clock***, from the original, before they were altered in the 50s and a sixteen year old Nancy speeding down roads in her blue roadster wasn't as acceptable. Nancy's self-reliant, the hero of the story, brave, smart, independent and has the decorative Ned Nickerson doting on her. I think those are qualities that Lottie shares, but with a modern twist."

Was ***Clubbing*** a project Watson was shopping around, or did the editors of the new Minx line come to him looking for something for their audience? "Well, it's a *long* story," Watson said. "The book's finally gone to the printers and I first talked to *Shelly Bond*, the Minx editor, in 2003 or 2004? Anyway, I'd worked on an earlier version of ***Clubbing*** in 2002 while driving around the Staffordshire countryside trying to get my baby daughter to have a nap in her car seat. Shelly asked me to pitch something and I figured ***Clubbing*** might be appropriate. It kind of went from there, on and off. It was all pre-Minx, or Shelly's earliest notions about Minx were around at the same time.

"Anyhoo, it's taken a while because there's been a lot of prep and market research and whatnot before launching the books. I saw some pics from BEA that had copies of ***Clubbing*** on display, which is fantastic—a book of mine will be getting a push into the bookstores. So it'll be interesting to see how it all plays out once the books on the shelves."

Why did Watson choose to work with another artist on ***Clubbing*** rather than illustrating it himself? "There were various reasons why I didn't draw it, but one of them was time. I couldn't work on ***Little Star*** and draw ***Clubbing*** too. I had to do ***Little Star*** before all those baby memories faded. Bottle feeds and nappy changes are ancient history now, all but forgotten, so maybe I made the right decision."

Watson approached ***Clubbing*** differently than his other projects. "With ***Glister*** I tend to work from an outline and then go to thumbnails so I have a rough framework that I can edit and change as I go along. Something like ***Slow News Day*** or ***Little Star***, where the dialogue is key to the book, I'll write a full script before breakdowns.

"With ***Clubbing*** I wrote a full script—quite a tight script, as I have a detailed idea of who Lottie is, how she reacts, dresses, her body language etc. Also, it's quite dense, in that Lottie's 'voice' is vital to the character of the book, so her dialogue and caption boxes are important."

Glister and ***Clubbing*** both feature memorable female leads; is that just coincidence, or does Watson particularly enjoy writing female protagonists? "It's a bit of a coincidence that they're coming out within a month of each other as ***Clubbing*** has been on the go for years. While I was working on ***Clubbing***, I was also creating ***Little Star*** which is purposely from a male perspective, so I can write both genders... I think!" Watson said with a smile. "Both my wife and daughter are intelligent, strong-willed individuals so maybe that has something to do with it!"

"Both Glister and Lottie are very different, but I do like them both. Lottie's really good to write because she shares my kind of sarcastic humour and she's smart and funny without being insufferable. I could have written a sarcastic male as the main character, but it wouldn't be much of a story, as a lot of the fun is putting a smart-aleck girl in the male world of a golf club."

As it turned out, Watson enjoyed working with both characters so much that not only will ***Glister*** continue, but Watson has plans to revisit Charlotte Brook's world again at some point in the future.

Just as many female readers enjoy comics starring male characters, Watson is confident that male readers will enjoy both ***Glister*** and ***Clubbing***. "The books have mystery, ghosts, and golf. I think everyone can agree that golf is funny; it's one of the few things that unites us all!" Watson joked before adding, "I definitely think both books will appeal to girls and boys, children and grown ups. I can only go by my own taste but I've really enjoyed making both, and believe they have a wide appeal."

Glister, a $5.99 64-page book from Image Comics, is scheduled for early August release. ***Clubbing***, a 176-page $9.99 manga-sized volume from DC's Minx line, is scheduled for mid-July release.

by Cliff Biggers
Comic Shop News

clubbing

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The following comics and comics-related books are tentatively slated for release on the dates given; if no date is given, the books are tentatively scheduled for release sometime in the month of July. It's very common for items to be delayed for a variety of reasons, so none of these dates are guaranteed. For the latest information on shipping and publishing delays, talk to the friendly folks at the comic shop where you got this issue of CSN! And yes, we are aware that some publishers regularly run an average of a month or so late on many of their titles—nevertheless, we go by the schedules they provide.

NOTE: At the request of many retailers, fans, and publishers, we have added Diamond Comic Distributors' code numbers after the publisher's name for each item; this will assist in placing special orders, etc.

○**10 20 & 30 VOL 1 GN** 7/5 NetComics MAY073643 $9.99

○**100 BULLETS #84** 7/11 Vertigo/DC MAY070232 $2.99

○**100 PERCENT PERFECT GIRL VOL 2 GN** 7/5 NetComics MAY073644 $9.99

○**1-800 MICE #2** PictureBox MAY073678 $5.00

○**2000 AD #1544** Rebellion MAY073684 $4.10

○**2000 AD #1545** Rebellion MAY073685 $4.10

○**2000 AD #1546** Rebellion MAY073686 $4.10

○**2000 AD #1547** Rebellion MAY073687 $4.10

○**2001 MANIACS SPECIAL #1** Avatar MAY073242 $3.99

○**30 DAYS OF NIGHT: EBEN & STELLA #3** IDW MAY073553 $3.99

○**30 DAYS OF NIGHT: SPREADING THE DISEASE TP** IDW MAY073557 $19.99

○**52 VOL 2 TP** 7/25 DC APR070184 $19.99
Collects the lead stories from 52 Weeks 14-26

○**ABIGAIL & ROX IN THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT** Digital Webbing MAY073400 $3.99

○**ACTION COMICS #851** 7/5 DC APR070170 $2.99
Geoff Johns, Richard Donner, & Adam Kubert continue "Last Son" with a special Phantom Zone issue offered in a stunning 3-D edition as well as a standard edition

○**ACTION COMICS #851 SIGNED** 7/19 DF APR073669 $29.99

○**ACTION COMICS #852** 7/25 DC MAY070132 $2.99
Kurt Busiek & Brad Walker present a three-part Countdown event focusing on Jimmy Olsen

○**ACTION COMICS 3D VAR #851** 7/5 DC APR070171 $3.99

○**ACTION PHILOSOPHERS #9** Evil Twin MAY073442 $2.95
This final issue focuses on as many thinkers as can be crammed into one 32-page comic

○**ADVENTURES OF DEXTER BREAKFAST SEASON ONE GN** El MacFearsome MAY073441 $13.95

○**ADVENTURES OF RABBIT AND BEAR PAWS VOL 1: GN THE SUGAR BUSH** Little Spirit Bear MAY073606 $7.95
Presenting the story of two mischievous Ojibwa brothers as they play pranks and have amazing adventures using a traditional Ojibwa medicine that transforms them into animals for a short time

○**AGE OF BRONZE VOL 3: BETRAYAL HC** 7/5 Image MAY071857 $27.99

○**AGE OF BRONZE VOL 3: BETRAYAL TP** 7/5 Image MAY071856 $17.99

○**AIR GEAR VOL 5 GN** Del Rey MAY073361 $10.95

○**ALAN MOORE: HYPOTHETICAL LIZARD HC** Avatar MAY073221 $24.99

○**ALAN MOORE: HYPOTHETICAL LIZARD TP** Avatar MAY073220 $14.99
Collecting the adaptation of the Alan Moore short story

○**ALAN MOORE'S WILD WORLDS TP** 7/5 WildStorm/DC FEB070329 $19.99
Collects Moore-written WildStorm projects featuring Wildcats, Spawn, Majestic, Voodoo, Deathblow, and more

○**ALIEN PIG FARM #4** 7/5 Image MAY071864 $2.99

○**ALIENS OMNIBUS VOL 1 TP** 7/11 Dark Horse MAR070043 $24.95
First volume in a comprehensive reprinting of all Dark Horse Aliens projects

○**ALIVE VOL 1 GN** Del Rey MAY073362 $10.95

○**ALL NEW ATOM #13** 7/5 DC MAY070130 $2.99
The Search for Ray Palmer continues

○**ALL NEW OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE A TO Z UPDATE #3** 7/25 Marvel MAY072107 $3.99

○**ALL STAR BATMAN & ROBIN THE BOY WONDER #6** 7/25 DC MAY070135 $2.99
Continuing the strange tale by Frank Miller & Jim Lee

○**ALL STAR BATMAN & ROBIN THE BOY WONDER #6 SGN** DF MAY073427 $29.99

○**ALTER EGO #69** 7/11 TwoMorrows MAY073879 $6.95
Spotlighting Roy Thomas during the 1970s

○**AMAZING SPIDER MAN #542 SIGNED** DF APR073670 $19.99

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○**AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #542** 7/25 Marvel APR072280 $2.99
"Back in Black" part four

○**AMAZING TRANSFORMATIONS OF JIMMY OLSEN TP** 7/5 DC APR070178 $14.99
Enjoy a heaping helping of those strangely-powered Jimmy tales from the Silver Age

○**AMAZONS ATTACK #4** 7/18 DC MAY070129 $2.99
Another 'country' joins the fight as a new, deadly opponent enters the fray! While Batman and Catwoman devise a plan to get to the bottom of the chaos, Grace - the Outsiders' 6' 6' female powerhouse - is about to be visited by her past. And in the midst of all this, Supergirl and Wonder Girl have betrayed the heroes and armed forces. Their target: the President of the United States!

○**AMERICAN JR VOL 1 TP** 7/18 Image MAY071858 $9.99

○**AMERICAN VIRGIN #16** 7/5 Vertigo/DC APR070258 $2.99

○**AMERICAN VIRGIN #17** 7/25 Vertigo/DC MAY070231 $2.99

○**AMERICAN VIRGIN VOL 2: GOING DOWN TP** 7/25 Vertigo/DC APR070259 $14.99
Collecting American Virgin #s 5-9

○**AMORY WARS #2** 7/5 Image MAY071865 $2.99
Continuing the Coheed & Cambria series

○**ANDRU AND ESPOSITO: PARTNERS FOR LIFE SC** Hermes JUN073629 $29.99

○**ANGEL DIARY VOL 7 GN** Ice Kunion MAY073526 $10.95

○**ANGRY YOUTH COMIX #13** Fantagraphics MAY073448 $3.50

○**ANITA BLAKE VAMPIRE HUNTER: FIRST DEATH #1** 7/11 Marvel/Dabel Brothers MAY072172 $3.99
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○**ANITA BLAKE VAMPIRE HUNTER: GUILTY PLEASURES VOL 1 HC** 7/5 DBPro/Marvel APR072351 $19.99
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○**ANNIHILATION: CONQUEST—QUASAR #1** 7/18 Marvel MAY072104 $2.99
The new Quasar - - a.k.a. Phyla-Vell, daughter of Captain Marvel - - embarks on an epic journey that could bring an end to Conquest

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Peter Quill is once again Star-Lord - - but what could possibly make him take on his former identity? And what brings together the motley crew that includes Bug, Captain Universe, Deathcry, Mantis, Groot and Rocket Raccoon?

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Who is the haunted loner known as Wraith?

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○**ARCHIE DOUBLE DIGEST #181** 7/25 Archie MAY073198 $3.69

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○**ARMY @ LOVE #5** 7/18 Vertigo/DC MAY070229 $2.99

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○**ART OF P. CRAIG RUSSELL HC SGN ED** Desperado MAY073374 $79.99

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Tony Bedard & Paulo Sequiera pit the Black Canary against the League of Assassins, who have set their sights on the child Sin, whom they believe to be the DCU's next greatest assassin

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In this graphic novel by Doug Tennapel, Eddie Paretti is so desperate for cash he's agreed to steal a dead body from his own mob boss! Things only get worse when he discovers the body isn't human!

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○**BLADE OF THE IMMORTAL #127** 7/11 Dark Horse MAY070047 $2.99

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Iron Man has been destroyed, the Sentry's wife is murdered, nuclear missiles are being launched around the world and the one man with the plan to stop the new and improved Ultron...is a God of War who's been an Avenger a total of five minutes. Sounds like Bendis & Cho are shaking things up!...

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David Petersen presents a sequel to the hit miniseries

MS. MARVEL #17 7/5 Marvel MAY072140 $2.99

MUGEN SPIRAL VOL 2 GN TokyoPop MAY073742 $9.99

MULTIPLE WARHEADS #1 7/5 Oni MAY073665 $5.99

Post-apocalyptic road trip adventure by Brandon Graham

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MYTHOS: FANTASY ART REALMS OF FRANK BRUNNER LTD DLX HC Vanguard MAY073791 $49.95

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NARUTO VOL 15 TP *7/5 Viz JUN073957 $7.95*

NEGATION VOL 3: HOUNDED TP Checker MAY073314 $17.95

NEGATIVE BURN #12 Desperado MAY073377 $5.99

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Presenting Rod Espinosa's adaptation of this timeless classic

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Brandon Jerwa presents a story set two years prior to the Sci-Fi Channel miniseries that relaunched BSG

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Spotlighting October 2007 releases

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○**STORMBRINGERS #1** Stormbringer MAY073715 $5.00
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○**SUPERMAN/BATMAN #38** 7/18 DC MAY070146 $2.99
○**SUPERMAN/BATMAN WORLDS FINEST BOOKENDS** 7/25 DC Direct DEC060312 $295.00
Designed by Steve Rude
○**SUPERNATURAL: ORIGINS #3** 7/5 WildStorm/DC MAY070225 $2.99
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○**SYNCOPATED COMICS VOL 3** Syncopated MAY073718 $15.00
○**TACTICS VOL 2 GN** TokyoPop MAY073743 $9.99
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Witness the origin of one of horror's most famous figures in this special one-shot
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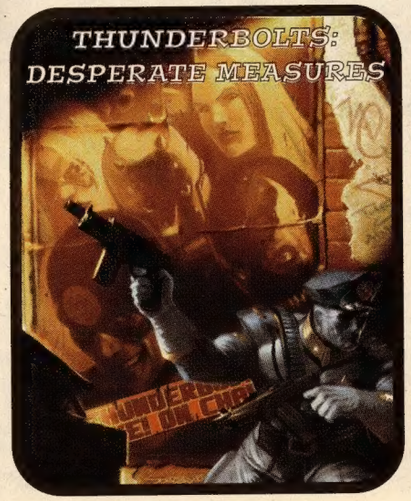
Norman Osborn has his own agenda when it comes to directing the Thunderbolts. But will he go too far when he sends Penance on what could be a suicide mission against the brutal, rogue law-enforcer, Americop?



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The Silver Surfer has arrived on Earth and no force can defeat him. But he is merely the herald of one whose power defies description-one to whom universes are mere stepping stones...Psycho Man!
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Logan returns to Madripoor
○**WOLVERINE: ORIGINS ANNUAL #1 SGN** DF MAY073436 $69.99
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○**YESTERDAY'S TOMORROWS GN** Knockabout MAY073593 $47.50
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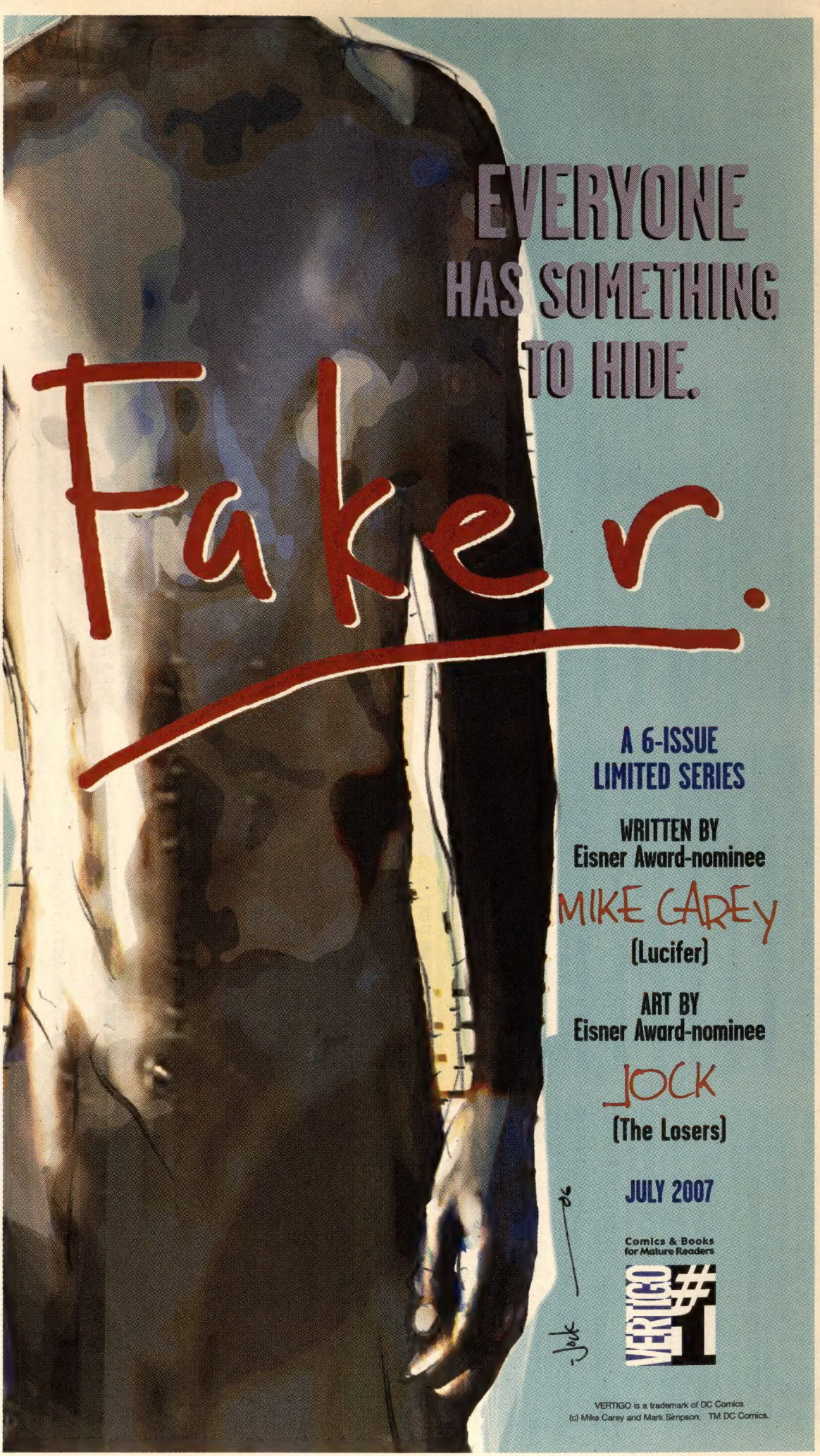
○**ZOMBIES VS ROBOTS HC** IDW MAY073547 $19.99


EVERYONE
HAS SOMETHING
TO HIDE.
Faker.
A 6-ISSUE
LIMITED SERIES
WRITTEN BY
Eisner Award-nominee
MIKE CAREY
(Lucifer)
ART BY
Eisner Award-nominee
JOCK
(The Losers)
JULY 2007
Comics & Books
for Mature Readers
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#1
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